

more humane and more just unemployment compensation award following an unexpected unforeseen layoff of the worker. I guess the real question that each one of us needs to ask ourselves is, what the appropriate measure of an award should be? How should we gauge the correctness or the incorrectness of our action in terms of unemployment compensation benefits? Now Senator Hall has provided this Legislature with what I think is a fairly reasonable benchmark and that is that we should have a program which would permit in effect continuation of a worker's wages through the unemployment compensation program at a level of two-thirds his former wages. Nebraska today is significantly below that level. The Hall amendment only begins to raise Nebraska toward that level but it still will be significantly below the level. Now I am working in my own mind as to how to speak so that individuals in this body will begin to understand the travail that the laboring man and laboring woman suffers on a job layoff, and I thought maybe the first analogy I should use is the unexpectedness of the layoff, a la the farmer. Today half of the members in this body are acutely aware of the marrow of their bone as the travail of the Nebraska farmer as the federal government pulls the rug out from underneath the Nebraska farmer. We are aware of that suffering. We understand precisely what is happening. Some say, well, the pulling of the rug out was justified, some say it wasn't justified, but it makes no difference. The rug got pulled and the farmer is suffering. The same thing happens to a laborer when he is laid off because the packing house closes, because the brickyard closes, because the flour mill closes. It makes no difference. The suffering is the same. That laborer has got a family that that laborer has to support until work comes along. The man or the woman lost the job through no fault of his own, through the economic vicissitudes, through the decision of a manager to close a factory to go elsewhere, through the decision to go locate a plant in Korea, Taiwan, or who knows what. It makes no difference. The man lost his job. The woman lost her job. Unemployment compensation benefits are designed, they are a part of our social fabric, to tide a family over until the next job becomes available. Unemployment compensation was developed in Germany in the 1880's out of the Bismarck regime. It was one of the first major forms of social insurance provided in Europe. It came into play during the Depression in our own country. It is a part of the woof and weave of our social fabric and we violate that woof and that weave when we fail